

Removal of Students from the Gifted and Talented Program

State Department of Education Criteria
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Division of Accountability
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The gifted and talented program exists to provide services to identified students that will develop their unique talents and abilities. Participation in an educational program that goes beyond the services provided by the regular classroom/school program should allow these students to achieve their potential. Identified students have demonstrated high performance ability or potential and therefore have the right to these additional services. Moreover, the services provided for identified students must match their area(s) of strength(s)—the way a student qualified for gifted and talented. Gifted and talented students are sometimes twice exceptional or underachievers. Therefore, the denial of services to a student who has qualified for gifted and talented requires careful attention and serious consideration.

Regulation 43-220 requires the State Department of Education (SDE) by January 1, 2005, to develop criteria for procedures for removing a student from the gifted and talented program. The regulation also requires districts to develop appropriate written procedures that are consistent with the SDE criteria for removing a student from the gifted and talented program (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.II.(B)(8)(c)). The Evaluation Placement team is responsible for developing these procedures and for final decisions relative to removal of a student from the program.

Removal is defined as discontinuing the participation of a student in the program. Prior to removal from a gifted and talented program, a student must be placed on probation.

Probation is defined as critically examining and evaluating the performance of a student with prescribed interventions for a period of time while the student remains in the program.

Both probation and removal require appropriate counseling with the student and documented conferences with the student, the student's parent(s), and teachers. Records of any assessment, evaluative measures, and other relevant student information must be maintained in a confidential manner.

Removal from the Pullout/Resource Room Program Model

Gifted and talented students served in the pullout/resource room program model often experience management problems as they learn to maintain and balance the responsibilities of the regular classroom and the resource room. The skills and strategies to function successfully in these two environments must be taught. Students should not be expected to navigate between these two educational settings without the support of the classroom teacher and the pullout/resource teacher. Frequent interactions and joint planning between the classroom teacher and the pullout/resource room teacher are critical to the success of students.

In planning for a student to be successful in a pullout/resource room program model, the district must provide

- curriculum in the resource room that is a match with the strength area(s) of the student and
- teachers with the ability and necessary resources to differentiate instruction within the pullout/resource room.

Also, the district must have written policy addressing the essential assignments that must be completed when a student is absent from the regular classroom because of participation in the pullout/resource room program. This policy should establish

- additional time to complete the essential regular classroom assignments (i.e. Assignments missed in the regular classroom and newly assigned homework are not both due the next day.) and
- a process for defining, explaining, and providing in writing the essential assignments to the student.

Neither of the above should not create a punitive environment for the student.

Similar written policy should address assignments that must be completed as part of the gifted and talented pullout/resource room program.

Research on the performance of students in South Carolina's pullout/resource room program models suggests that students need two complete years in the program to make the adjustments of working in a regular classroom and pullout/resource room. To remove a child prior to two years of active participation in a pullout/resource program is a questionable action without substantive concerns for the student's physical, emotional, or social health.

Criteria for Removal from a pullout/resource room program

1. A child has completed two years in the program, and performance in the regular classroom and/or the pullout/resource room has not been acceptable by both the parent(s) and the teacher(s).
2. Regular conferences with the student, teachers, and parent(s) have been conducted and documented.
3. Specific strategies for supporting and improving student performance have been implemented and monitored by the student, parent(s), and teacher(s).
4. Regular counseling has been provided by the school's guidance counselor to support the student during the probation period.
5. Grade point average is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
6. Performance on PACT is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
7. Poor behavior is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
8. A student's social, emotional, or physical health is a factor related to removal from the program.
9. The student and parent(s) are advised that the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Removal from the Special Class or Special School Program Model

Gifted and talented students served in the special class or special school program model are engaged with a curriculum that reflects acceleration and enrichment in a specific discipline. Both the special class and special school model recognize that students display high ability or potential in some academic areas but not in others.

To be successful in the special class model, a gifted and talented student must be placed in a special class that corresponds with the strength(s) of the learner. For example, it would be inappropriate to place a child in a language arts special class if a child's only strengths were non-verbal/quantitative and mathematical.

To be successful in the special school model, a gifted and talented student must be provided with classes that correspond with the strength(s) of the learner and classes that compensate for and support academic weaknesses of the learner. As stated earlier, gifted and talented students may display high ability or potential in some academic areas but not necessarily in all academic areas.

In planning for a student to be successful in a special class or special school program model, the district must provide students with

- a special class or special school that is a match with the strength area(s) of the student;
- curriculum for the special class or special school that is differentiated and articulated in a written scope and sequence;
- teachers with the ability and necessary resources to differentiate instruction within the academic area(s);
- processes and strategies for gathering diagnostic data on student performance level(s) and monitoring student performance; and
- policies regarding assignments that must be completed as part of the special class program.

If a student is removed from a special class or special school and returned to the regular class or school, the ability of the student to perform adequately in the special class or special school must be addressed. Adequate performance must not be measured solely by grades. Careful consideration must be given to providing academic support, accommodating learning styles, ensuring a curriculum match with the student's strengths, addressing motivational issues, and attending to any social, emotional, or physical concerns that might affect student performance.

Criteria for Removal from a special class or special school program

1. A child has completed a minimum of one report card grading period but no more than a semester in the special class or special school, and performance has not been acceptable by both the parent(s) and the teacher(s).
2. Regular conferences with the student, teacher(s), and parent(s) have been conducted and documented throughout the grading period(s).
3. Specific strategies for supporting and improving student performance have been implemented and monitored by the student, parent(s), and teacher(s).

4. General counseling to support the student has been provided regularly by the school's guidance counselor.
5. Grade point average is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
6. Poor behavior is not the sole indicator under most circumstances.
7. A student's social, emotional, or physical health is a factor related to removal from the program.
8. The student and parent(s) are advised that the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Procedure for Removal of a Student by a Parent

If a parent wishes to remove his or her child from the gifted and talented program, the parent should complete a "Request for Removal" form specifying the reasons for this request. A sample form is provided. This form will be given to the district coordinator of gifted and talented programs who will conduct a meeting of the Evaluation Placement team with the student, parent, and teacher present. The Evaluation Placement team will have the final authority for approving or denying the request. When responding to the request of a parent, the same criteria for removal should be applied whenever possible. If a student is removed from the gifted and talented program at the request of a parent, the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Parent/Guardian Request for Removal of Student from the Gifted and Talented Program

I request that my child _____, be removed from the gifted and talented program. I understand that if my child is removed from the gifted and talented program, he/she may not participate for the remainder of this current school year. Further, I understand that my child will not be required to requalify for service in the gifted and talented program and will be eligible to return for service at the beginning of the next school year. It is my responsibility to advise the school if I wish for my child to return to the gifted and talented program since he/she will have missed a significant portion of the curriculum designed for gifted and talented students.

I am requesting the removal of my child for the following reason(s):

I understand that the Evaluation and Placement team for the gifted and talented program will review this request and notify me in writing of a date and time to discuss this request.

Date

Signature of parent

Name of Student _____

School _____ Grade _____